

The Capability Approach and Human Development

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Objective of Development

“Development can be seen...as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy.”

Opening Sentence, Development as Freedom

The goal of development is the “promotion and expansion of valuable capabilities.”

“Development as Capability Expansion”

“Human development is about people, about expanding their choices to lead lives they value... Fundamental to enlarging human choices is building human capabilities: the range of things that people can do or be.”

Opening Sentence, Human Development Report 2002

- ✍ Objective of Development
- ✍ Functioning
- ✍ Capability and Freedom
- ✍ Information and Analysis
- ✍ Basic Capabilities
- ✍ Value Judgements and Public Debate

Sen's Capabilities Approach

***Capability is
the Freedom to Achieve
Valuable Beings and Doings***

TWO MAIN IDEAS:

Freedom

Valuable Beings and Doings

(Sen calls these *functionings*)

Valuable Beings and Doings (functionings)

✍ These are all the 'ends' of human life

(They can also be means)

✍ They can be **elementary**

escaping morbidity and mortality; nourishment; mobility

✍ They can be **complex** self-respect, participation in community life, ability to appear in public without shame.

✍ They can be **general** – capability to be nourished

✍ Or they can be **specific** - capability to drink 7up.

Functionings

- ✍ 'the various things a person may value doing or being'
- ✍ 'functionings are *constitutive* of a person's being.'
- ✍ **Achieved Functionings** :
measurable, observable, comparable.
Example, literacy; life expectancy.

Freedom

for Sen, Freedom has two aspects ~

Positive Freedom:

Having the
resources you need

Negative Freedom:

Having the space to
choose - not being
controlled from
elsewhere.

Examples of Freedom

Positive

Having the food you need to be nourished

Being free from material poverty

Negative

Being free to visit your family in city

Being free to choose your job or career

Being free to have children

Freedom and Capability

- ✍ **Capability** : 'represents the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve. Capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another...to choose from possible livings.' *IR* p 40
- ✍ **Intrinsic and Instrumental Value**: "The 'good life' is partly a life of genuine choice, and not one in which the person is forced into a particular life – however rich it might be in other respects."

Additional Information

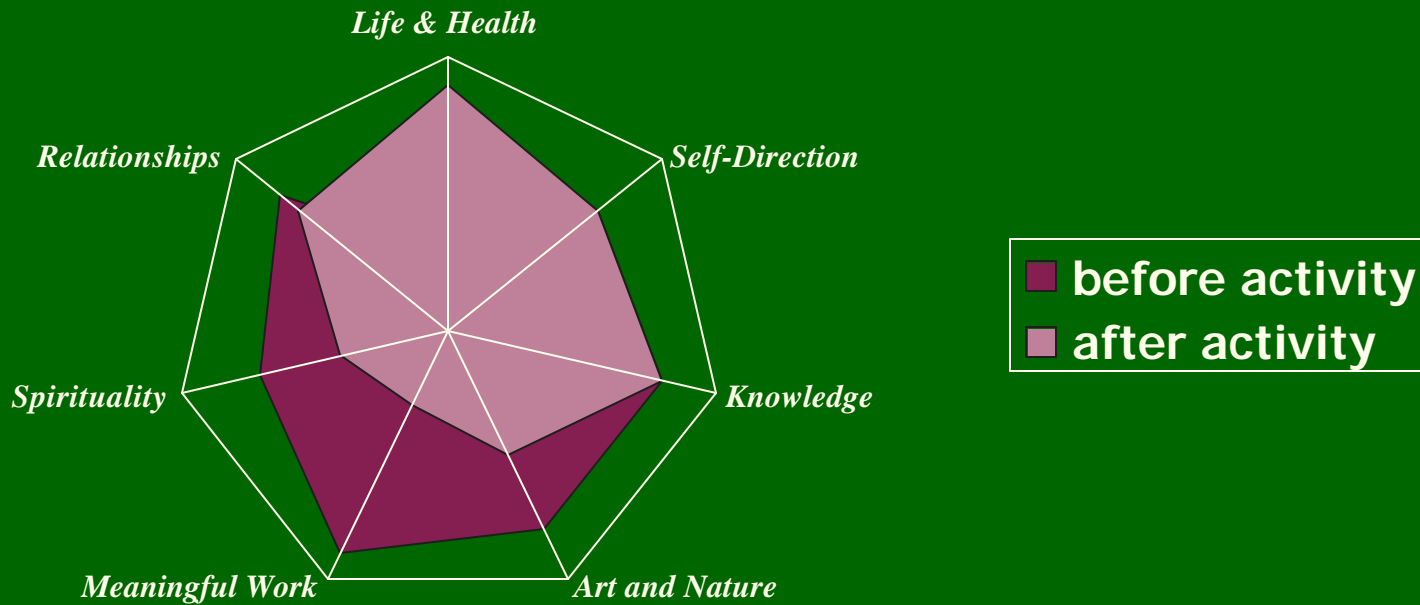
- ✍ Human Rights
- ✍ Situated Evaluation
- ✍ Unintended Consequences

Finnis 1987: Basic Human Values	Sen 1999:	Nussbaum 1998: Central Human Capabilities	Rawls 1993 <i>Political Liberalism</i>	Doyal & Gough 1992: Intermediate Needs
Bodily life – health vigour and safety Knowledge Skillful performance in work and play Friendship Practical reasonableness Self-integration Harmony with ultimate source of reality	political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, protective security	Life Bodily health Bodily integrity Senses, thought imagination, Emotions Practical reason Affiliation Other species Play Control over one's environment	The basic liberties freedom of movement, freedom of association and freedom of occupational choice against a background of diverse opportunities powers and prerogatives of office and positions of responsibility in political and economic institutions income and wealth the social bases of self respect	Nutritional food/water Protective housing Work Physical environment Health care Security in childhood Significant primary relationships Physical security Economic security Safe birth control/ childbearing Basic education

Dimensions of Human Development

- ✍ **life** (health, reproduction, security);
- ✍ knowledge
- ✍ work and play
- ✍ relationships
- ✍ spirituality
- ✍ participation
- ✍ inner peace
- ✍ appreciation of beauty
- ✍ harmony with the non-human world

The Problem: Capabilities Contract as well as Expand



Participation and Trade Offs

- ✍ "Participation also has intrinsic value for the quality of life. Indeed being able to do something not only for oneself but also for other members of the society is one of the elementary freedoms which people have reason to value. The popular appeal of many social movements in India confirms that this basic capability is highly valued even among people who lead very deprived lives in material terms." Dreze and Sen 1995:106